

**Self-Assessment for Kansas:
a Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process
to Benefit Services for Children with Disabilities (Birth To 21)
and Their Families**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
October, 2002**

**Kansas Stakeholder Steering Committee (Birth to 21)
Kansas Department of Education, Student Support Services
Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Infant-Toddler Program**

Kansas Self Assessment EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The responsibility of the state of Kansas to provide appropriate services for children with exceptionalities, birth through 21 years, and their families requires daily activities of the lead agencies: Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE), Student Support Services and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), Infant-Toddler Program. In 2002 Kansas lead agencies were notified they were to begin the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

A first step in this Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is for the state agencies to facilitate a steering committee's completion of a self-assessment. The Kansas Steering Committee has completed the assessment of Kansas' implementation of the Part B and Part C requirements of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA).

The Kansas Steering Committee members have a vested interest in the quality of services for children with disabilities, birth to 21. Steering Committee members represent a wide-range of constituents interested in the appropriateness of services for children with exceptionalities and their families.

The Executive Summary for the Kansas Self-Assessment will address three questions:

1. What were the results of the self-assessment?
2. How did the Kansas Steering Committee complete the self-assessment?
3. What are the next steps of the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process and future plans for Kansas?

What were the results of the self-assessment?

The Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process assesses a state's implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-R) requirements. The key requirements are identified in cluster areas.

Part B Cluster Areas	Part C Cluster Areas
General Supervision (Systems within the state to ensure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA-R.)	General Supervision (Systems within the state to ensure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA-R.)
Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment	Early Intervention Services in Natural Environments
Parental Involvement	Early Childhood Transition
Secondary Transition	Public Awareness and Child Find Systems
	Family-Centered Services

Overall results of the Self-Assessment indicates Kansas meets the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Kansas ranks above average in comparison to other states in all areas.

Identified strengths in the Part C cluster areas include effective systems within the state to ensure compliance with the requirements of the IDEA-R as demonstrated through

- KDHE monitors local programs to ensure compliance
- Interagency agreements ensure services
- Resources ensure timely delivery of services

Part C family-centered services are a strength:

- Families participate in meetings
- Decisions include family-directed identification of needs and the opportunity to accept or decline any/all services

Another Part C strength is early intervention services are provided in natural environments

- children and family needs are identified
- appropriate services are provided for children and families
- Services are provided in natural environments
- Qualified personnel provide appropriate services
- Family service plans are individualized

Part C public awareness and child find are a strength:

- Materials focus on early intervention
- Medical staff are informed to make referrals
- Required time lines are respected
- Child find is coordinated with other programs and services
- A service coordinator is appointed in a timely manner after referral

Strengths in the Part B services include several areas in the general supervision area:

- Complaints are resolved in a timely manner;
- State's system identifies deficiencies and corrects general supervision findings in a timely manner;
- Enforcements actions will be used when necessary;
- Data collected through SEA monitoring process are used to effect systems change; and
- Corrective actions from formal complaints, due process, mediation and reviews are implemented in a timely manner.

Strengths in the areas of Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment and Secondary Transition include these issues:

- The percentage of children with disabilities receiving special education is comparable to national data;
- The drop out rate of students with disabilities is comparable to students without disabilities;
- The percentage of services provided along each point of the continuum is comparable to national data; and
- Graduation rates for students with disabilities is comparable to students without disabilities in the state of Kansas.

The only area identified for needed improvement in the Part C self-assessment is the early childhood transition cluster. Concern is focused on the percentage of children leaving Part C services to Part B services are placed in inclusive preschool or other settings.

Areas identified for needed improvement in the Part B self-assessment:

- Kansas continues to struggle with providing appropriate transition services for secondary students.
- Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment concerns center around three areas: (1) disproportionality of special education placements by race/ethnicity, (2) below average percentage, compared to national percentage, of early childhood placements in environments developed for non-disabled children, and (3) less than

acceptable services provided to children with disabilities whose behavior impedes learning, especially the in use of suspension/expulsion.

How did the Kansas Steering Committee complete the self-assessment?

Kansas had anticipated entering the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process (CIMP) in the fall of 2001 and began the process of organizing a Steering Committee and identifying and collecting data well in advance of that date. John Copenhaver, MPRRC, facilitated several of our meetings and provided invaluable information regarding the process and the role of the Steering Committee. Subsequently, lead agencies were notified by OSEP that we would enter the CIMP a year later than originally expected. In the meantime, the Student Support Services (SSS) Team had a change in administration, with a new Team Leader (State Director) coming on board in June 2001.

The KDHE Infant-Toddler Program, Part C, continued to have sub-committee meetings between the fall of 2001 and spring of 2002.

In the spring of 2002, SSS and the Part C, Infant/Toddler staff began meeting to reorganize the Steering Committee and to develop a process for conducting the CIMP. The combined staff met every Monday morning and also met with representatives from the Beach Center to determine how we would conduct the public input sessions. The staff planned and jointly executed the Steering Committee feedback meetings. The Steering Committee meetings in June and October 2002, were facilitated by the Beach Center staff.

The SSS team organized itself into Cluster Groups according to the “Cluster Light” document. SSS team members and Part C, Infant-Toddler staff gathered much of the data and organized it for review by the Steering Committee membership. The SSS staff in each of the cluster areas maintained on-going contact with the members of the Steering Committee as they updated the self-assessment based on input from the Steering Committee.

The Kansas Steering Committee membership included representatives from all stakeholders. It includes members from the Interagency Coordinating Council and the Special Education Advisory Council. These advisory councils are legislatively mandated and ensure broad representation. The Steering Committee membership was assigned or volunteered to focus on one of the various Cluster Groups. The “Cluster Light” was different from the 2001 document that Kansas had started working with, so data previously collected were reorganized and updated. The Steering Committee reviewed the data and gave input and suggestions for additional data and/or resources. Members of the Steering Committee who had access to relevant data provided it to the process. The following is the sequence of events and meetings related to the CIMP Steering Committee:

- Feb. 10, 2000 – First general meeting with John Copenhaver, MPRRC, presenting an overview of the Federal monitoring process. Committee members received notebooks, discussed potential composition of committee (regional representation, parents, students, providers, minority representatives, etc.), and subcommittees needed.
- Committee membership – see attached list of members.
- Subcommittee organization – by cluster and indicator areas
- Aug. 17, 2000 – Second meeting, also with John Copenhaver providing general information about Steering Committee roles and organization, followed by subcommittee meetings to review data collected to determine what additional information was available and relevant.
- Nov. 30, 2000 – Third meeting, primarily subcommittee work again.
- Subcommittees continued working independently between these meetings in 2000.
- Spring, 2001 – Kansas was informed the Federal monitoring process would be delayed until the 2002-2003 year
- Part C Infant-Toddler staff continue to have subcommittee meetings with Steering Committee members assigned to relevant clusters.
- Spring 2002 – KSDE staff were assigned to work with the cluster areas and assist in gathering and analyzing available data.
- Spring 2002 - The Steering Committee membership was reviewed and revised to ensure that it was representative of the State.
- Spring 2002 - Updated data for cluster areas were sent to Steering Committee members for their review.
- June 6, 2002 – Steering Committee met for a marathon session, mainly emphasizing the subcommittee work in critiquing the first draft of the self-assessment by indicators under each cluster light area. Each subcommittee discussed the information provided, reviewed all data, made recommendations for ratings, considered possible improvement strategies, and gave feedback to cluster captains and KDHE and KSDE staff responsible for writing the narrative.
- June 26, 2002 – Steering Committee Self-Assessment Workgroup participated in a conference call to review work completed at the large-group meeting earlier in the month.
- Revisions were made to these drafts, mailed to the Steering Committee and the Special Education Advisory Council for their review.
- September 26, 2002 - The third draft of the Self-Assessment document was sent to Steering Committee members.
- Oct. 4, 2002 – The Steering Committee met to consider relevance of data to the clusters and ensure a match between data and the rating given to each cluster area. Public input results were provided to the committee to use during these considerations. Some Steering Committee members also provided editing comments.

- October 2002 – The KDHE and KSDE staff responded to the Steering Committee recommendations, finalized the Self-Assessment document and mailed to OSEP on October 17, 2002.

Throughout the process, the Steering Committee and KDHE/KSDE staff focused on outcomes for children and improving the quality of the services provided in Kansas. All realized the need to balance the accountability between child outcomes and compliance.

Data collection and the data to be considered were frequently discussed with the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would like to see data disaggregated by school district so efforts can be focused where there are concerns. The data included in the OSEP Self-Assessment were presented in the Biennial Performance Report, the CIM yearly summaries, Quality Performance Accreditation building reports (Kansas's school improvement process), 618 data submitted to OSEP, and reports for the State Improvement Grant..

At the end of the October 4, 2002 meeting, the KSDE Student Support Service Team and the KDHE Infant-Toddler Program staff asked members to evaluate the Steering Committee process during the self-assessment phase. All comments were positive, ranging from moderate to full agreement. A sampling of comments are presented. When asked if the Steering Committee actively influenced the preparation and validation of the Kansas Self-Assessment, members responded:

- I am confident the steering committee input was incorporated and was vital in framing the discussion.
- I feel like a valuable member as a parent. Even if I had questions and comments, I felt comfortable asking. Parents don't always feel that their opinions are valuable (my opinions mattered here).
- Participation in the validation process was good. We definitely influence what was moved forward—toward the development of a final document.
- Comments and input from June were considered in October drafts.
- Input made the document more consistent and improved the quality of the data.
- I think the staff selected and collected the data to be used, but I think the interpretation of that data was very much the function of the Steering Committee
- Would have preferred to have more formal collection of suggestions for future planning.
- My impression is that our opinions and ideas are incorporated and drive the document.

Members responded to “What are the strengths of the Steering Committee process?”

- Open discussion, allows for opposing and affirming comments, involved everyone, valued all opinions, and we kept within time limits.
- Good moderating, did not attempt to sway individual opinions.
- Moved through a tremendous amount of information in a fairly thoughtful process.
- Opportunity for vibrant discussion and input.
- Input and collaboration from several different perspectives throughout the state.
- It appears to me my comments were responded to in the changes between the June draft and the October draft.
- Gives a broad constituency the opportunity to validate and comment upon the state self-assessment document.
- Group work/activities plus opportunities to review/edit/incorporate others’ work/comments.

Members also recommended improvements for this process as we begin Improvement Plan development.

- Use of tele-conferencing, half-day meetings and meet more frequently
- Start earlier. The comments from the parent meetings are very instructive. Could a group of parents be facilitated to take the lead on responding to some of the key assessment items pertaining to parental involvement? Should have involved representatives from CMHC and CDDO.
- Develop public information packet to share what has been accomplished and areas slated for improvement.

What are the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process next steps and future plans for Kansas?

The Steering Committee, in cooperation with the KDHE Infant-Toddler Program, Part C, and the KSDE, Part B, will begin identifying improvement strategies for implementation. Kansas programs will submit Improvement Plans to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The Self-Assessments and Improvement Plans will be reviewed and approved by OSEP.

The Improvement Plans will focus on areas of needed improvement as identified through the Self-Assessment. The Student Support Services also will work to continue to align practices with the Kansas Quality Performance Accreditation process and the No Child Left Behind legislation. Part B and Part C will work to continue to strengthen interagency collaboration between their agencies and with other agencies providing services for children.

KSDE and KDHE goals are consistent with the conclusions reached in the introduction to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997). State agencies recognize Kansas has an obligation to establish high standards and set expectations for students with disabilities. Ensuring access to the general curriculum, or appropriate activities for young children, and requiring students to be included in state and district assessments will continue to serve as tools for improved instruction and accountability.

The Student Support Services Team and advisory groups will review and adjust Kansas Program Goals and Indicators to include the results of the self-assessment. The goals will be consistent with the Kansas State Board of Education Goals and Strategic Directions. Resources provided to LEAs will be directed toward the Goals and Indicators as well.

Kansas will continue to ensure compliance with legal process and will refine accountability for results. KSDE will continue to focus resources provided to LEAs so areas of need are addressed. Kansans are proud of many practices and services for children with disabilities. The Steering Committee and KSDE and KDHE staff are proud that the Kansas self-assessment is based on data, data presented publically. The baseline data are collected. Efforts will now be directed toward improvement strategies. Kansas children will benefit from these efforts!

Kansas OSEP Steering Committee

Part B Members	
Jane Adams	Keys for Networking, Advocacy
Shirley Armentrout	SEAC, Private School, Parent
Doug Bowman	SEAC, Interagency Coordinating Council, Parent of a Child w/ Exceptionality
Judith Carlson	Council of Exceptional Children
Terry Collins	Director of Special Education
Justin Cosco	Student
Larry Cyrier	
William Daugherty	Superintendent, KS School Blind
Mark Desetti	KNEA
Zack Doering	Student
Lesli Girard	PTI, Families Together, Inc.
Bob Goodwin	SEAC, Related Services
Carrie Greenwood	Student
Ken Hund	SEAC, Adult Correctional Facility
Sue Ann Kline	Behavior Support Project
Marilyn Layman	
Christy Levings	
Barb McGrath	SEAC, Juvenil Correctional Facility
Deb McVey	LEA, School Psychologist
Robert Maile	Supt, KS School Deaf
Tes Mehring	IHE
Bert Moore	SEAC, Director of Special Education
Steve Nilhas	LEA Superintendent
Margery Oaklief	
Ray Petty	SEAC, Person w/ Disability
Andrea Roddy	Kansas Rehabilitation Services
Eunice Thompson	Kansas Rehabilitation Services
Danny Thornton	SEAC, LEA Official/Parent
Jane Rhys	Director, DD Council
Janet Schalansky	Social & Rehabilitation Services
Patricia Schremmer	SEAC, Parent
Tom Skrtic	SEAC, IHE
Sue Stacey	SEAC, Teacher
Sharen Steele	LEA Principal
Janice Suddath	
Sean Swindler	KS Advocacy & Protective Services
Mark Tallman	KS Assoc of School Boards
Josie Torrez,	SEAC, Parent
Karen Untereker	SEAC Chair, Teacher
Dr. Jim Wheeler	SEAC, Charter Schools
Connie Zienkewicz	PTI, Families Together, Inc.
Part C Members	
Corrie Edwards	Keys for Networking, Advocacy
Lona Foust	Local Infant-Toddler Coordinator
Jennie Heim	
Ed Henry	Local Infant-Toddler Coordinator
Sharon Hixson	Local Infant-Toddler Coordinator and State ICC Chair

Chet Johnson	KU Children's Developmental Unit
Jamey Kendall	KDHE Special Health Services
Tom Manthey	
Maria Martinez	Parent on State ICC
Joe Porting	KDHE Infant-Toddler Services
Jennifer Prince	
Vera Lynne Stroup Rentier	Kansas Inservice Training System
Phil Rust	Local Infant-Toddler Coordinator
Legrand Salvant	
Jennifer Schwartz	Parent and Assistive Technology Consultant
Sheila Simmons	Kansas Assistive Technology Project
Theresa Tetuan	KDHE Adolescent Health
Mark Tremaine	
Deb Voth	State ICC Member
Carolyn Weinhold	SRS Head Start Collaboration Project Director
Jim Wise	Parent and Audiologist
<u>Tracy Wohl</u>	KDHE Health Policy Analyst
Ed Young	Local Infant-Toddler Coordinator